

Weekly COVID-19 Update – Sept. 3, 2021: Hospitalizations, Cases Continue Concerning Trend Upward

The Delaware Division of Public Health (DPH) is providing an update on the most recent statistics related to coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Delaware, as of 6 p.m. Thursday, September 2, 2021.

A total of 121,283 positive cases of COVID-19 among Delaware residents have been reported to DPH since March 11, 2020. The seven-day average of new positive cases increased to 396.7 as of Thursday, September 2, 2021.

As of Tuesday, August 31, the seven-day average for the percentage of total tests that were positive was 7.6%, an increase from 7.4% of Tuesday, August 24. There is a two-day lag for presenting data related to percent of tests that are positive to account for the time delay between the date of the test and the date that DPH receives the test result.

In addition, 233 individuals are currently hospitalized due to COVID-19 in Delaware, an increase of 23 from last week. Forty-eight of the hospitalized persons are critically ill, an increase of 14 from last week.

A total of 1,888 Delawareans have passed away due to complications from COVID-19. Thirteen deaths were reported in the past week, seven of which were from a review of vital statistics. The total number of individuals who have died from COVID-19 range in age from younger than 5 to 104 years old. Of those who have died, 956 were female and 932 were male. A

total of 937 individuals were from New Castle County, 392 were from Kent County, and 559 were from Sussex County.

Protect Yourself During the Labor Day Weekend:

With the holiday weekend upon us and many people enjoying the last long weekend of the summer, it is important to remind those who are not vaccinated that the best protection against COVID-19 is to continue to wear a mask and to get vaccinated as soon as possible. COVID-19 cases are on the rise and Delawareans should make the necessary effort to protect themselves against the virus.

According to guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Delawareans should consider wearing a mask in crowded outdoor settings and for activities with close contact with others who are not fully vaccinated. To maximize protection from the Delta variant and prevent possibly spreading it to others, DPH strongly encourages wearing a mask indoors in public.

DelVAX Public Access Portal:

Delawareans can now access their immunization record through the DelVAX Public Access Portal. Parents and legal guardians can print official immunization records for their child/children (ages 0 through 17 years), and adults (ages 18 years and over) can print an official immunization record for themselves. For information and link for the DelVAX Public Access Portal:

<https://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/ipp/portalflyer.pdf>.

This portal will assist those who need to provide proof of COVID-19 vaccination but may have lost their vaccination card. While DPH does not replace the card, Delawareans now have an easier way to access their vaccination record. DelVAX is the official record for a person's vaccination data. Individuals who need assistance can call 1-800-282-8672, or email DelVAX@delaware.gov. Responses to emails and calls received after regular business hours or on weekends may take up to 48 hours.

COVID-19 Vaccinations:

According to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 76.3% of Delawareans ages 18+ have received at least one dose of the vaccine. As of 12:01 a.m. September 3, 2021, a total of 1,123,792 administered doses of the COVID-19 vaccine have been reported to the state's immunization information system, DelVAX. Among Delawareans 12+, 559,801 have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, and 500,441 Delawareans are fully vaccinated. Delaware's latest COVID-19 vaccination statistics can be found under the Vaccine Tracker dashboard at de.gov/healthycommunity.

Vaccines are the best protection we have against COVID-19 and circulating variants. For the latest information on the COVID-19 vaccine and the vaccination rollout in Delaware, visit de.gov/covidvaccine.

COVID-19 Case Vaccination Status Report:

The following report captures a weekly breakdown of vaccination status for cases, deaths, and hospitalizations for the time frame for August 23 – August 29. The report highlights the significant percentage of cases and hospitalized individuals in Delaware who are unvaccinated, or only partially vaccinated. Vaccination continues to be the most important factor in reducing deaths and hospitalizations from COVID-19.

Weekly Overview (8/23 -8/29)			
Unvaccinated Cases			
Total Unvaccinated / Partially Vaccinated Cases		2023	
Total Cases		2582	
Percent of Unvaccinated / Partially Vaccinated Cases		78%	
Hospitalizations			
Unvaccinated / Partially Vaccinated Hospitalized Cases		100	
Total Hospitalized Cases		117	
Percent of Unvaccinated / Partially Vaccinated Hospitalized Cases		85%	
Deaths			
Unvaccinated / Partially Vaccinated COVID-19 Deaths		8	
Total COVID-19 Deaths		9	
Percent of Unvaccinated / Partially Vaccinated COVID-19 Deaths		89%	

Breakthrough Cases:

To date, 500,441 Delawareans have been fully vaccinated. Of those, there have been 1,843 breakthrough cases of COVID-19, occurring in approximately four-tenths of 1 percent of vaccinated individuals. Forty-five of the reported breakthrough cases identified since vaccinations began involved hospitalizations and 21 individuals passed away, although it does not mean COVID-19 was the cause of death. Breakthrough cases continue to be extremely rare given the total number of persons who are fully vaccinated, and the science is clear, the best way to prevent serious illness from COVID-19 is to get vaccinated.

A breakthrough case is defined as testing positive for COVID-19 after an individual has been fully vaccinated for two weeks or more – although it does not mean that the infection actually occurred after vaccination.

Update on COVID-19 Variant Cases in Delaware:

As of Friday, September 3, the Division of Public Health has identified the following COVID-19 variants in Delaware through routine surveillance of test specimens. These variants are based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) list of Variants of Concern and Variants of Interest. The below table represents cumulative totals.

Variants of Concern			Variants of Interest		
Variant	Origin	# of Cases	Variant	Origin	# of Cases
Alpha/B.1.1.7	United Kingdom	1007	Eta/B.1.525	UK/Nigeria (formerly New York, US)	2
Beta/B.1.351	South Africa	1	Iota/B.1.526/B.1526.1	New York, US	330
Gamma/P.1	Brazil	64			
Delta/B.1.617.2	India	415			

Of the test samples that were sequenced in the last week, 159 (69.4%) of the 229 test samples sequenced at the DPH Lab were positive for a variant strain, as were 2 additional specimens sequenced at an outside lab. Ninety-nine percent of the 161 variant positive samples this week were identified as the Delta variant strain.

The Delaware Public Health Laboratory has sequenced 4,109 specimens for COVID-19 variant strains to date. In aggregate, the cases include 1,515 adults ranging in age from 18-98, as well as 304 individuals under the age of 18. A total of 1,316 individuals were from New Castle County, 260 were from Kent County and 243 were from Sussex County.

Virus mutation is common. Sequencing for variants is a complex process and is not used for diagnosing COVID-19. It is used after a positive case of COVID-19 has been identified for surveillance purposes, or in identifying the presence of a variant strain in the community. When variant strains are identified, public health approaches and treatments do not currently change. Because these variants may spread more easily, it is even more important that unvaccinated individuals who are more susceptible to getting COVID-19 continue taking the necessary steps to avoid spreading the virus – wearing a mask, washing your hands, and being cautious when attending large gatherings.

The science is clear that the vaccines are extremely safe and effective even against variants – and Delawareans who are fully vaccinated have significant protection from COVID-19 infection and serious illness. We would encourage all Delawareans to get vaccinated – de.gov/getmyvaccine.

For more information regarding CDC variant classifications, visit

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/variant-surveillance/variant-info.html>.

DPH COVID Vaccine Mobile Units:

DPH officials in partnership with medical staff from the Delaware National Guard (DNG) have launched mobile units to offer COVID-19 vaccines in underserved communities. Medically trained DNG staff are offering the Pfizer vaccine (for ages 12+) and the Johnson & Johnson vaccine (for persons 18+). These mobile units are visiting communities with low vaccination rates in an effort to eliminate potential barriers to access. The mobile units, which utilize trailers to transport the vaccine and provide vaccinations, are scheduled to visit these communities in New Castle, Kent and Sussex counties next week. COVID-19 testing will be available at each location.

Tuesday, September 7

Royal Farm, Hartley, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Shoppes at Hamlet, Dover, 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Bancroft Elementary School, Wilmington, 2:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday, September 8

Immanuel United Methodist Church, Cheswold, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Wawa, 2800 N DuPont Hwy, Dover, 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Thursday, September 9

Dollar General, Seaford, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Bethel Market, Bethel, 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Goodwill, 300 E Lea Blvd, Wilmington, 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Friday, September 10

Congo Funeral Home, Wilmington, 10 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

*dates may be rescheduled if there is inclement weather

For a full list of community-based events statewide including those organized by vaccinating partners and community groups at de.gov/getmyvaccine.

Long-term Care Statistics:

As of 6:00 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 2, there have been a total of 2,851 positive COVID-19 cases involving long-term care residents, and 831 residents of Delaware long-term care facilities have died from complications related to COVID-19.

Symptoms and Testing:

It's especially important for unvaccinated persons to be aware of and self-monitor for the symptoms of COVID-19. DPH recommends that unvaccinated people get tested once a week. Even fully vaccinated persons should get tested if they develop symptoms or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19.

If you are sick with any of the following symptoms, stay home: fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, muscle aches, fatigue, chills, shaking with chills, loss of smell or taste, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, or headache or congestion or runny nose without a known cause such as allergies. Other symptoms such as abdominal pain or lack of appetite have been identified as potential symptoms related to COVID-19 and may prompt further screening, action or investigation by a primary care provider.

Individuals with general questions about COVID-19 should call Delaware 2-1-1, individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing can text their ZIP code to 898-211, or email delaware211@uwde.org. Hours of operation are:

Monday – Friday: 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Saturday: 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Medically related questions regarding testing, symptoms, and health-related guidance can be submitted by email at DPHCall@delaware.gov.

Delawareans 18 or older are encouraged to download COVID Alert DE, Delaware's free exposure notification app to help protect your neighbors while ensuring your privacy. Download on the App Store or Google Play

Questions related to business re-openings or operations as businesses re-open should go to COVID19FAQ@delaware.gov. Questions regarding unemployment claims should be emailed to: UIClaims@delaware.gov.

DPH will continue to update the public as more information becomes available. For the latest on Delaware's response, go to de.gov/coronavirus.